National Waterways Project

2348.SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are seriously thinking of launching the National Waterways Project throughout the country;

(b) if so, the details of the specific decisions, if any, taken in this regard;

(c) whether it is a fact that the National Waterways Development Council, Madurai has submitted a proposal pertaining to the National Waterways Project;

(d) if so, the salient features thereof; and

(e) the action taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIP KUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) National Waterways Development Council (NWDC), Madurai submitted a proposal titled 'National Waterways Project'. This project envisages construction of three artificial big canals namely, Himalayan Canal (4500 kms long), Central Canal (5750 kms long) and Southern Canal (4650 km long). Cost of the project is approximately Rs. 4,00,000 crores. This project is of the nature of multipurpose water resource project covering irrigation, flood control, power generation and navigation.

(e) A national perspective plan for inter-linking of rivers by which water can be transferred from water surplus basins to water deficit areas has already been prepared by the Ministry of Waster Resources. Therefore, yet another National Waterway Project is not warranted.

Development of inland waterways transport

2349. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have considered the possibility of tapping